

Alcester Grammar School Record.

No. 25.

DECEMBER, 1926.

EDITOR—MR. DRULLER.

COMMITTEE—B. WELLS, L. SMITH, PARTRIDGE i, BAILEY.

Editorial.

With the present number the "Record" reaches its quarter-century, and, to mark the occasion, we are including as a frontispiece a photograph of Mr. Wells. This photograph has been taken specially for our magazine, and will, we feel sure, be much appreciated by all subscribers, both past and present scholars. In addition, most of the articles in this number have come from the pens of Old Scholars, who have readily responded to our appeal for contributions.

Headmaster's Letter.

DEAR READERS,

Most of us at the School will remember the Autumn term of 1926, as having been a truly disastrous time. An epidemic of measles has more than decimated our numbers, whilst half the staff have, at one time or another, had to fall out of the ranks. Especially have we regretted Miss Evans's long absence at the Sanatorium. Had we been living in ancient times we might almost have thought that there was some malign influence at work, or that the gods Jupiter and Mars, whose planets have been so brilliant in the Autumn sky, were adverse to the School. But we know better in these days, and though we regret time lost, and work sadly upset, we hope our troubles have come all at once, and that, having weathered them, a calmer and more fortunate time awaits us.

I have been and am still much concerned for those Old Scholars who, having done their best to prepare at School, and afterwards, for work in the world, find themselves, in

the rush and hurry of things, apparently unwanted. It is a terribly disappointing experience, but one which is bound to come to many in these times. I make two suggestions to any such. First, qualify yourselves still further while you wait; and second, look abroad. We are too thick on the ground in England, but the Colonies have room and work for you, if only you have the courage.

In these days, youth is so often criticised as being utterly unrestrained, and sadly lacking in knowledge of true courtesy and respect, that one fears there must be some truth in it. With that thought in mind I pass on to you these words of a great Scotchman. "This is the thing which I know, and which if your labour faithfully you shall know also—that in reverence is the chief joy and power of life—reverence for what is pure and bright in your own youth; for what is true and tried in the age of others; for all that is gracious among the living, great among the dead, and marvellous in the powers that cannot die."

My best wishes to all Past and Present Scholars at this Christmas Season, from

YOUR HEADMASTER.

The School Year, 1926-27.

AUTUMN TERM: September 15—December 21.

Half Term: Monday, November 8.

SPRING TERM: January 19—April 5.

Half Term: Monday, February 28.

SUMMER TERM: April 27—July 30.

Half Term: Monday and Tuesday, June 6 and 7.

The School Register.

Valete.

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| *Sherwood, M.A. (VI), 1918-26. | Bird, P. (Vb), 1921-26. |
| *Bishop, G. F. (Va), 1920-26. | Harris, P. G. (Vb), 1922-26. |
| *Farmer, J. E. (Va), 1920-26. | Brookes, J. (IVa), 1920-26. |
| Green, C. M. (Va), 1920-26. | Corbett, T. L. (IVa), 1922-26. |
| Harwood, H. L. (Va), 1921-26. | Jones, C. S. (IVa), 1922-26. |
| Mason, W. (Va), 1921-26. | Baylis, M. (IIIa), 1921-26. |
| *Rook, F. E. (Va), 1923-26. | Ainge, D. (IIIb), 1918-26. |
| *Staff, I. G. (Va), 1919-26. | Bomford, J. (IIIb), 1918-26. |

* Prefect.

Salvete.

Baylis, C. H. (IIIA).	Pope, E. (IVB).
Browning, M. A. (IIIA).	Sherwood, P. H. (IIIB).
Fisher, J. (IB).	Sisam, B. (IA).
Horton, G. D. (IIIB).	Skinner, M. E. (IIIA).
Lloyd, T. (IIIA).	Sollis, G. B. (IIIA).
Pellow, D. (II).	Sollis, O. M. (IIIB).
Pinfield, H. N. (IIIB).	Spencer, E. Y. (IIIA).
Plevin, E. F. (IIIA).	Treadgold, W. J. (IB).

Old Scholars' Guild News.

HON. SECRETARY—K. Perks. HON. TREASURER—L. Sisam.

The Summer Reunion took place on Saturday, July 24th. Unfortunately, we were not favoured with our usual weather, and tennis had to be abandoned almost at once. Charades and games were played in the hall until tea-time, when the weather relented and the annual group photograph was taken. Although the courts and field were soaked, tennis and broomstick cricket were played by most of the members until 8 p.m., when the business meeting was held. After supper, dancing took place until midnight.

At the business meeting Mr. Wells was re-elected President, K. Perks became Hon. Secretary, and L. Sisam Hon. Treasurer. M. Whitehouse was elected, and Mr. Druller and A. Finnemore were re-elected to the Committee. It was reported that the seat given to the School by the Guild was formally presented on July 12th. It was decided that in future the Guild accounts should be audited annually, and B. Walker and N. Staff were appointed Hon. Auditors.

We were extremely sorry to accept the resignation of E. Bowen. Elected to the Committee in July, 1923, he became Hon. Secretary in December, 1924, and his work has been invaluable. The very successful Reunions and Dances that have been held lately have been largely due to his enthusiasm and energetic work. The whole Guild will join in congratulating him on his appointment to a post with Messrs. W. & T. Avery, of Birmingham, and in wishing him every success in his future career.

The cricket match against the School was arranged for July 26th. We were all very disappointed when rain caused it to be scratched.

An O.S.G. Flannel Dance was held in the Town Hall on Friday, August 13th, and was a great success. Each member was allowed to bring a friend, and about 90 people were there. Messrs. Spencer's Band, of Redditch, was engaged, and was much appreciated. During the dance a telegram was received from our President wishing us a pleasant and successful evening. Refreshments were served in the Church House, and dancing was continued until 2 a.m. Mr. Wells very kindly lent us one of the School pianos. Will all those Old Girls who helped with the refreshments, and the Old Boys who helped move the piano, accept our very hearty thanks.

The Winter Reunion will be held at the School on Saturday, December 18th, irrespective of weather. We shall be glad to see as many Old Scholars as possible.

We hope to hold another dance, run on similar lines to the Flannel Dance, during the Christmas holidays, and also several informal dances in the early part of 1927. Old Scholars please support the Guild on these occasions, as any profit will go into our Fund, which is not as high as we should like.

In a football match against the School XI., on October 9th, the following represented the Old Scholars' Guild:— E. Bowen; C. Bunting, H. Hodgkinson; E. Perkins, L. Harwood; C. S. Jones, A. Rook, H. Hewitt, E. H. Mander, S. Baylis. Result: O.S. 3, School 0.

Congratulations to M. Griffiths and M. M. Hemming on obtaining the Board of Education Teachers' Certificate in July.

A successful Dance was held in the Town Hall on Saturday, November 27th. About 90 Old Scholars and friends were present. A profit of approximately £1 5s. was made, and this has been paid into the Guild account.

Has any Old Scholar a copy of No. 2 of the School Magazine (December, 1915) that he would sell? If so, please communicate with the Secretary.

Marriages.

On August 16th, at Haselor, Ella Stock (scholar, 1913-21),
to Harry, Edward Whitehouse (scholar, 1912-16).

On September 14th, at Topsham, South Devon, Violet
Mary Stuart to John D. Lyon-Smith (scholar, 1915-18).

Births.

On May 28th, to Mr. and Mrs. S. P. Perkins (née Elsie
Finnemore), a son.

On October 22nd, to Mr. and Mrs. W. Heard (née Dorothy
Perks), a son.

Memories.

“ Oft as on my couch I lie,
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye,
Which is the bliss of solitude.”

When Wordsworth wrote these well-known lines he was expressing, not merely a sentiment which was for him above all men a cherished conception, but a truth which is for everyone deep and eternal. I wonder how often at A.G.S. we sang together that glorious hymn, “Forty Years on,” and how little we realised its significance! In those days youth was impetuous and thoughtless, the blood was rampant in the veins, and the days seemed far distant when we should cease to gather in happy family in those trim buildings beside the river.

At that time A.G.S. was for us a fact; a reality—sometimes grim—of work and pleasure. The atmosphere of happy comradeship which I always associate with the School pervaded our everyday existence. We began the days with prayers upon our lips, and ended them with a song in our hearts. The happy interludes of work and play sent life along with an exhilarating swing; we moved from the morning to the twilight of our school life almost unconscious of the progress of time and the challenge of the future. Ay! we were a contented band. In the classroom there was always that sense of courtesy and chivalry which comes so easily through co-education. The interaction of character, which inevitably follows the association of boys and girls,

made us realise that, though the immediate race might be to the strong, there were far deeper considerations to be noted in the conduct of our daily life. Our surplus energies were worked off in not unwelcome fashion upon the playground and the playing field. How often, indeed, did that greensward echo to the tramp of the twenty-two! How grim was the struggle, how determined the toil, as we fought for the supremacy of A.G.S. upon the fields of sport!

Time passes, and the relentless passage of the years has scattered some of us far from that scene of joyous youth. It is not unfitting that on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of the Record, one should look back over the ancient track. To-day, A.G.S. is but a memory, yet one of that cherished type which Wordsworth has enshrined in his "Daffodils." The memory is sweet, for it reminds us of some of the great days of life; days of fresh air, whether in rain or sun, when we had not yet to face the responsibilities of the world, and when others were dedicating themselves to our service. The vista of the years grows longer with the passing of the days, but always—as down a long avenue—we glimpse our Alma Mater still standing, waiting as only an institution can wait, to offer a welcome to any of her sons who may return. Many of us will go back, and—like Tom Brown—stand once more amid the old scenes and unfamiliar faces, but even as the memory of A.G.S. is still fresh in our minds, let us hope that for years to come, when we return to that home, we may meet there many of our old friends. "The few remain, the many change and pass," but above all things the buildings will endure. Summer's heat and winter's snows cannot efface them, and while they stand, while we who knew them so intimately have minds withal to think, the memory of A.G.S. will be ever-present—a source of happy and refreshing thought;

" Meditation here

May think down hours to moments. Here the heart

May give a useful lesson to the head,

And learning wiser grow without his books."

E. H. MANDER.

Valete.

" But when I came to man's estate,

With heigh ho, the wind and the rain! "—

and ere he passes down the well-known path of ye old
grammar school and out of its gate for ever, Feste doth once

more stretch his motleyed limbs 'neath yon shadowing elm, and lips wont to fling the passing jest, now linger fondly o'er their task of reminiscence.

Eight years! eight long years, and yet, withal, eight swiftly-passing years, fraught with regret, perchance, much joy, and wondrous consequence. During these years has been much change. A.G.S. has developed many excrescences. Cloak-rooms have grown large and draughty. Drying-rooms, forbidden territory, entrap enterprising youth. Another playing field, of turf unrolled and grass uncut, has provided yet one more point of energetic controversy between hockey and football teams. Huts, those low, brown, army huts—oh, my æsthetic soul!—have disfigured our horizon, capturing our surplus flock, in winter to chill their young blood with stove-smoked atmosphere of ice, in summer to enfeeble them with fiery heat. Pig-tails are now almost extinct, and cropped heads walk up both front paths, while landscapes up the stairs, rainbow socks, and a gramophone in drill have brightened somewhat our daily life. Yet much still remains unchanged. Every morning brings B—A—B, whereby many generations of A.G.S. have improved their final consonants; every dinner-hour gathers the careless many and the irritable one to the detention room; every term brings round the general handshake; every year an unclouded Sports Day.

How vividly the early memories of A.G.S. arise! Away back in Form III. Remove, ere it was elevated to the dignity of Physics lab., an unruly crowd romped and hooted away their time. Whether it was our unusual numbers or our isolated position, or the bare and unadorned appearance of our classroom, or, yet again, the aftermath of war that accounted for our behaviour, I know not. "Rude Remove" we were called, and many, many times after the war the rafters re-echoed stentorian reproofs while we sat in awed silence. Though excessively refractory, we were not wholly bad or incapable of finer impulses. Suspended from the gas bracket was our motto: "What's brave, what's noble, let's do it!" We were very proud of that motto, and, according to our ethical interpretation, we lived up to it—a fact not entirely incompatible with our conduct, since we invariably confounded what was "noble" with what was "brave"!

Transferred to IIIA, we rapidly improved in behaviour, and ere the summer term arrived we had acquired the

respect of the School, the goodwill of the staff, and the laudable appellation of "Mr. W.'s baby angels," though when one cherub was discovered in an uncomfortable sedentary position in the waste-paper basket, which had proved a fascinating vehicle upon the polished floor, but strangely reluctant to part with its passenger, our seraphic character was almost forfeited.

The next three forms produced vast changes. The boys developed startling hose, immaculate creases, and curious voices; the girls polished their nails, produced a variety of bandeaux, and waxed hotly indignant when form lectures became eloquent on the "flapper". We at length made our acquaintance with Southey's "Life of Nelson," Julius Cæsar, and Ovid. Alas for the pathos of the loves of Pyramus and Thisbe! To the young cynic of Vb it provides merely a source of heartless merriment.

Then comes VA, when high spirits are oppressed by approaching examinations, when privileges are gained and responsibilities undertaken. Some to the "lab." do wend their way, where their activities remain a mystery to the rest of their form mates, save when obnoxious fumes pervade the atmosphere. or when somebody's tadpoles are poisoned. From the rest Virgil draws a reluctant appreciation of the Latin tongue. The glories of the Aeneid make even the week-end prose worth while. To some the extended horizons of history and English is joy indeed; to others, a sore stumbling block; while the monster, mathematics, lurking long, now prowls abroad. Summer approaches, all too soon. The strain of work has reached the uttermost. One day desks are carried to the art room, and certain pale green papers appear. Then, VA, you let loose all your pent-up energy. Tennis, rounders, cricket, "paper-basket"—anything, everything is indulged in with frenzied enthusiasm. Oh, the joy of "letting go," and the exhilaration in real rowdiness! Just a plea for them, when their "rash, fierce blaze of riot" exceeds all bounds, by one who knows. It only happens once a year; it is a valuable safety valve; it makes life worth living at a very dismal time; it sends away those who are leaving with a joyous impression of their last school days; it encourages those who are not to work harder—for such another exhibition of joie de vivre, and—I am sure they deserve it.

And now the VIth is attained, and the two most interesting, most valuable, and by far the most enjoyable years are

spent. No, I will not divulge its mystery, or recount the jolly life we lead. If you really want to know, work hard and get there. It is worth it.

And so, at last, 'tis finished, and all the glorious years, so filled with so many happy memories—whereat IIIb looks up ruefully from his "lines," and IVb gazes regretfully out of detention windows, and VA cynically waves his green paper—all these glorious years are over. Next term, A.G.S. will start afresh, and we shall not be there. Its familiar activities will continue as of yore, and we shall have no part in them. We shall cross the waters of Lethe, we shall sail with the grisly boatman of Styx, but never again will the daily life of A.G.S. be ours. A new dawn breaks, bright, yet dimmed with mist, behind a city of towers and chimneys, where learning and industry beckon to add a few more yet to the vastness of their numbers. With a sigh, as we take a last glance at A.G.S., ever an ineradicable memory, we step from the threshold—whence? But heigh-ho, thy jester muses long, his quips and his quiddities are forgotten, and, with chin in palm, he wears an expression most unsuited to cap and bells. Take up thy bauble, sir, recover thy wandering wits! So doth thy jester make his bow, and, with prosperity and success to A.G.S., he bids his audience farewell—a very long farewell!

M. S.

Notes and News.

The Head Girl for this year is E. Lane, and the Head Boy Earp.

The Prefects are E. Lane, B. Wells, L. Smith, B. Thomas, B. Hughes; Earp, Partridge i., Brewer, Bailey, Gwinnett i.

This year's Football Captain is Partridge i, and the Hockey Captain is B. Thomas.

The following are the Sides Captains:—Brownies, E. Lane and Savage; Jackals, B. Thomas and Earp; Tomtits, B. Wells and Partridge i.

The bat which is presented annually to the boy who has shown the best form in Cricket went to Summers i.

K. Williams was the recipient of the tennis racquet.

Some changes were made in regard to classrooms this term. Form IVA. exchanged with Form II., and Form IIIA. with Form IIIB.

Miss Tracey, who joined the Staff in September, was compelled on grounds of ill-health, to relinquish her position at the end of November.

The Games Subscription amounted to £6 16s. 7d.

Miss Jones was absent, through illness, for the first three weeks of term, and Mr. Hough-Love filled the vacancy.

Miss Evans has been absent, through illness, during the greater part of the term. Her place has been taken by Miss Gallifant.

A lantern lecture on "Through Somerset and Devon in May," was given on Friday, October 29th, by Mr. H. Browning Button. Slides were shown of the principal places of interest in the two counties.

Another lantern lecture was given on Friday, November 12th, by Mr. W. S. Rowntree, on "Extinct Animals." Some very interesting slides were shown.

Miss Deans has also given two displays of French slides—on October 22nd and November 26th.

The two minutes' silence was observed as usual on Armistice Day, November 11th.

Attendance at School this term has been seriously affected by an epidemic of measles in the district. In addition, cases of chicken pox, diphtheria, scarlet fever and whooping cough have helped to deplete our classes.

In consequence of the number of boys and girls absent, the Scouts' Concert has had to be postponed until next term.

The following weather observations have been recorded by members of Form VB.:—

	October.	November.
Highest Temperature ...	69°F.	62°F.
Lowest Temperature ...	33°F.	27°F.
Average Temperature ...	45.6°F.	46°F.
Rainfall ...	2.49ins.	4.57ins.
Rain fell on ...	12 days	22 days.

Tous les Romz.

[The authors of the following narrative, who, for reasons of personal safety, desire to remain anonymous, make no claim to style or literary excellence. This account of the Summer Reunion, however, has been written in such a way that the name of every member of the Old Scholars' Guild appears therein. If, however, a name has been omitted, the clever person discovering this will be allowed to pay one guinea (or more) to the funds of the Guild, by way of reward.]

The great day dawns, many hopeful eyes scan the heavens. According to time-honoured signs and portents, conditions are not too promising. However, there are some hours yet to elapse, so why not chat-away and be merry? As the morning wears on weather conditions still harass us. Everyone, not only A.G.S. Old Scholars, anxiously fear more rain which will probably mean the overflowing of the brooks and wells, and corn completely ruined, with a consequent further burden to our troubles.

However, we mount our trusty cycles and head for Alcester. As we pass the White House and leave the meat-yard behind us we feel the first drops of rain. Savage old Francis turns upon his lamblike companion with an angry remark as we hurry across the noble Heath of Alcester. We gain the School at last, and the sight of the lawns and fields neatly marked out for play brings balm forthwith to our drooping spirits. But no! the Clerk of the Weather seems determined to disappoint us to-day, and now the threatened storm is upon us. The out-door programme is impossible; so we turn our thoughts to such up-to-date and exciting indoor pastimes as Charades or Morris dancing.

"Ah well, I suppose it will have to be! but such disappointment does make one sigh some!" Our Treasurer seems anchored to a teacher's desk; so we take this opportunity to pay our annual subscriptions. So great is the crush around him that we find it difficult to part with our money. Tactful reminders as to arrears are received coldly, and some-one was heard to remark that it would be impossible to pay

three years' arrears at one fell swoop as it would skin 'er. Our ever cheerful Secretary gives optimistic replies to all questions regarding the weather; he certainly seems to hold a better opinion of the British climate than most of us. "Cheer up, my sweet Williams; it will sun again soon."

Tea is mooted and seems the most attractive suggestion just now, and so we proceed down the corridor to partake of all that has been so carefully prepared for us. Tea over, on coming once more into the corridor, we perceive a few late comers have just arrived looking like Perks after his attempt on the Channel. So it has not yet stopped raining. They explain their late arrival by giving us a most spirited account of a fight they had witnessed. "We stopped, you see, to cheer Hodgkins on, who was taking revenge for Lang stunning him the previous night." However, conditions do look a little more hopeful, and that cheery soul, the photographer, is choosing the ideal spot for the group photograph. After many an anxious glance at the sky we troop out and take our positions according to his instructions. "What, must we stand with our backs t' the wall! Well, yes, it certainly is the only way to remain erect on these benches." The Photographer takes his final inspection of us, and I notice that the lady, who last year had to be given a hint to pull herself together, lest 'er position should be too prominent, has discreetly hidden herself this time.

The ordeal over, we decide to commence the out-door programme. Ah! Broomstick Cricket. "James, bring my staff, I will brave the elements, and we must certainly hurry, as our time has already been seriously curtailed." The sides being picked, a very respected member of our Committee, gripping his stick with a hold worthy of a smith, takes first knock. We are soon hemming in our opponents, and our prospects of victory seem very bright. "Just look! there's Lu well in, and Cis an' Alexander still to bat." The last few men have piled on the runs and ruse after ruse is being tried in order to get them out. My! did you notice Jeff cut that one to the boundary, and although high clean bowled next ball, now with a smart drive nearly bring sudden death to Mr. Wells' gander, who had strayed near the field of play. Meanwhile, Smith at the other end is playing with typical A.G.S. determination—and yet at one time we feared he might not give of his best as he had kinsmen on the opposite side. "How's that?" cried the wicket-keeper—"Thomas, my dear fellow, you are out!" "Do not talk so basely, the bail is still on, but before going further I demand a new broomstick."

The tennis is also providing many thrills. What did we hear Griff hiss when his partner served a double fault? Oh shame! but small wonder when we see at the other side of the net Richards on top of his form, and admirably backed up by Joan's excellent net play. Ah! would I could play like her!

By this time the whole of our stock of balls rests either in the Shrubbery, which seems as thick as Sherwood Forest, or among Mr. Wells' Dorothy Perkins. "Don't you think we should organise a hunt?" "Aye, verily, I do."

Such fun brings dusk all too quickly, and the games are not all decided when we are called into the inevitable Business Meeting. As we make our way to the Hall, the ground being more like a fen, clay ton by ton is being carried inside. At the door we are met by our Secretary, who is busy bowin' to the right and left.

On looking round we are happy to note such a representative gathering, although we miss the Edkins and Thompsons. Our Treasurer utters his usual concern at our balance at Lloyds Bank, and still shows inclination to receive any subs that may be offered him. Do I actually see someone asleep on this most important occasion? Ben ate such vast quantities of Osborne biscuits at tea time, that I feared this might happen. Although some excuse might be made as the seats certainly have got hard.

Seeing the Treasurer still holding boxes of tennis balls I venture to ask him if we are going to indulge in a little indoor tennis. "No fear" he replies, "these are to sell, man."

For the dancing the Hall has been gaily decorated with bunting, and upon entering I notice Frank lingering around the piano. "Are you in the band?" "Rather," he replied, "and this is the horn I blow." "Really, I prefer to use my energy dancing." Paul Jones is proving as popular as ever, but so great is the crowd that having secured a partner it is difficult to hold 'er. Finne more and more enjoys himself as the evening wears on, and the conclusion of an extra vigorous one-step finds him puffing as if he had just ascended a steep hill.

I have noticed that a member of the staff has been missing for some time, and now learn that he has been in the master's room, peacefully smoking a pipe of Bradley's tobacco. "Yes, I certainly agree the band is fine, but we

might, with advantage, have included a harper, although after all our indefatigable committee have endowed us well with music, and really the pianist is an angel. Everyone seems to be enjoying the dancing, and yet on such a crowded floor it must be an acrid delight.

Ah! I feared so—midnight approaches apace, and I realise another most successful gathering is drawing to a close. Once more, anxious enquiries are being made as to the weather, and as I am walking home across the Bees' Lea and through the Chilly Bom ford I am more than pleased to know that the rain has ceased. Besides, the rooks will caw better on a fine night; my companion will not have to wheel 'er bicycle through the pouring rain, and all the walkers will have a pleasant return journey after such an enjoyable Reunion.

B. & M.

Olla Podrida.

"We took a crucible," says J. M., "and placed it on a clay pipe." How exciting!

Several members of Form VI. would be interested to learn what it was that D. S. B. had "mentioned in a subsequent essay."

Pedes apparat ire comminus J. G. renders as "His feet appear to go together."

According to J. S., the best way to collect chlorine is to fill a gas jar with water and then—pour in the chlorine!

A certain vault is performed, we are told, by putting the front leg over the horse first.

From our IVA Latin experts:—

Talo, quae pars corporis vulnerari potuit—Talus, who was carrying part of Vulnerarus's body.

Quoad vires suffecerunt—where men had been suffocated.

Ulixis sermone placatus—Ulysses charmed with the sermon.

De Mensibus Infelicibus.

The gods sat in conclave assembled,
And listened with laughter repressed;
While lofty Olympus all trembled
At the words (which the thunder resembled)
Of Jupiter, Greatest and Best

"Heaven-dwellers, lo! there far below you
Lies a region of fortune too blest;
Where the denizens no respect show you.
'Tis my will—and who'll gainsay it?—know you.
To smite one and all with the pest."

He had said. No delay made Mercurius,
But to Stygian Avernus straight sped,
Whence he summoned Allecto the furious,
With her arts and her poisons injurious,
The pestilence deadly to spread.

Whereon she, not a moment's space biding,
From her tresses uncoiled, as she willed,
A hundred fell serpents which, gliding
To mortals and in their breasts hiding,
As many contagions instilled.

And straightway (to tell it is wonder!)
Came rashes and soreness of throats,
Heads were broken, and bones split asunder,
Whereat the dread Erinnyes under
Her robe Acherontian gloats.

Within Olympus' proud portals,
The gods shook with mirth unrepressed
At the harm they had done to poor mortals;
And most loudly of all the Immortals
Laughed Jupiter, Greatest and Best.

XNOQ.

Synonyms and Suchlike.

"A rose by any other name would smell as sweet," quoth the Immortal Bard. Well, every English schoolboy in the IVth Form knows that—so would a fried fish shop, incidentally. However, what Mr. Shakespeare did not know about roses was not worth knowing, and besides, he had by

this time no doubt, discovered whether those which adorned the cheeks of Mistress Anne had ever seen the inside of a rouge-pot. Yet granting that the above pretentious truism is sound, do not think that Napoleon I. could ever have rallied the armies of France under the name of Adolphus Marmaduke Todhunter, or that Mr. A. J. Cook will ever make an effective Bolshevik until he forsakes his nominal respectability for something similar to Azinoff Jamfortiski. A woman is allowed to change her name as often as she can, and no one has yet found a way to prevent evil doers from adopting the same expedient, but the purpose of these few lines is to call a spade a spade, the which lofty purpose being immediately accomplished we will endeavour to unravel the mystery of the synonym.

"Per ardua ad alta," "Through toil and tribulation shalt thou come to thy heart's desire," which being rendered in the vernacular would read, "Thou shalt fall down many times before thou dost reach the top of the moving staircase at Charing Cross"—this is the spirit in which we face our task. The banal conversation of the modern girl has neither the brilliance of the seventeenth nor the dignity of the eighteenth century. That is not a synonym. It is a sentence worthy of Julius Cæsar crossing the Rubicon, its studied eloquence is equal to any line in Shakespeare, and above all it is certainly as near to the truth as anything else that I shall say in this article. I can think of quite a lot of things that are not what people would call synonyms, but when I find something interesting I always like to spread the news, even at the risk of displeasing our Editor. For instance, I recently heard one illiterate member of the British Empire state that poetry was a roundabout way of saying something that did not matter after all. I immediately ordered him a hot bath in Keats, to be followed by cold fomentations from Wordsworth every two hours. Some people say that we shall have a Revolution, which would be very unpleasant, like mumps or measles, only worse. If we do I shall saddle my old grey mare.

And away to the hills I shall wander.—I don't like killing; It's so rough, and besides, if it happened before Christmas, nobody would be able to read this article.

Gentle reader, did you hear what the Editor just said? If you did not, don't ask; it only meant "Cobbler stick to your last." Mr. Editor, this is my last, my very last. When I was young, as my father can specify, I used to cry a great deal like other little boys, and my brain was one great blank. That blank has now got a little black spot in the

middle, probably a disease of some kind By this time dear Reader you have no doubt come to the conclusion that I am a fool. "Rem acu tetigisti"—you have probed the argument with a toothpick. It is a synonym.

A. J. P

Folk Lore.

Folk-tales, folk-songs, and folk-dances are the natural and unstudied expression of the early nations of the world. Nothing has been a greater source of inspiration to writers and composers of late years, than the folk-lore handed down by our early ancestors.

In the time when sunset brought rest from work, many hours were spent in telling the strange stories, learned in a similar way from the previous generation. Many of these old legends have come from a time so remote, that their real origin is unknown. As a result of such frequent narration, much has been added to the old stories, and possibly, much has been lost. Changes such as these, however, only serve to emphasise more clearly the chief characteristics of the nation to which they belong. So important is folk-lore now considered, that a serious study of it has been encouraged by societies formed for the purpose, similar to the English Folk Dance Society, founded by the late Cecil Sharp.

Folk-dances and folk-songs are closely connected, often possessing the same tune. At the festive seasons of the year—when Spring brought fresh vigour with its promise of new life, when that promise was fulfilled by Autumn's rich harvest—the young people danced the old dances of their ancestors. The Swedish weaving dance suggests the harvesting of flax and the weaving of linen. The "chain" movement so often found in dances both traditional and modern, gives another glimpse of the process of weaving. Another "labour" dance is the well-known Sailor's Hornpipe. Foremost among the national dances of the British Isles are the Scottish reel and the Irish jig. Of the characteristic dances of other countries, the swift Italian tarantella, the stately Spanish saraband, and the lively Polish mazurka are famous.

Folk-songs have been described as the laughter and the tears of those who, hundreds of years ago, lived and loved as we do now. They are as spontaneous as the song of the nightingale, and are beautiful in their simplicity. English Songs have a decided rhythm in harmony with the firmness

of the national character. Welsh, Irish, and Scotch songs have much in common, all three nations being Celtic in origin. The sad life of a Russian peasant is pictured in the minor melodies and wild rhythms of Russian songs.

Amongst the most appealing of British songs are those of the Hebrides. Their melodies have the characteristic Celtic sweetness, interwoven with the music of surging waters and wailing winds. These songs possess a charm peculiar to Hebridean music alone, caused by the absence of strong European influence. In the Hebrides, labour and song are almost inseparable. Each type of "labour" song has a rhythm perfectly suited to the movements of the worker, giving pleasure which lightens toil.

It has been said that the English are an unmusical race. This reproach has at last been lifted by the untiring work of Cecil Sharp, in collecting the old folk-songs and dances so nearly forgotten. His work, keenly appreciated in other countries, has established a closer bond between the nations of the world.

B. J.

Trials and Tribulations of a Handcraft Student.

When I told my numerous friends and acquaintances that I was contemplating taking a handcraft course at a local School of Art they held up their hands in holy horror, and exclaimed, "My dear child, when you draw, it is impossible to distinguish a cow from a cabbage." Putting on my most dignified air, I scornfully informed them that I had reached years of discretion, and was therefore no longer a child, and that my failure to draw to their satisfaction was not due to my lack of ability, but to the fact that I had always considered drawing was waste of important time at School.

Their sarcasm turned my desire into determination, and so my first day came. The Art Room presented a most businesslike appearance, and from the Metal Room came noises so strange that I began to think that I had strayed into Ford's factory. A discussion arose as to what course I should take, and such words as "jewellery, modelling, heavy metal, leatherwork, stained glass" reached my benumbed brain. At last I managed to exclaim that I was entirely ignorant of all these things; so it was decided that I should start on leather. How weird it all seemed. I was going to make a purse; therefore, I must first cut out

a paper pattern. I opened my eyes in amazement. Surely, it was a mistake—I wasn't making a frock! However, the Art Master was quite determined that he was right, and so I decided to bow to his superior knowledge as gracefully as possible. Then came the question of a design. How glad I was that my sarcastic friends could not see my struggles. Sheets and sheets of drawing paper were covered with strange scrawls resembling Egyptian hieroglyphics. Now I have learned wisdom, and when I want an important design I look pathetically at the Junior Master, and ask if he is in a particularly good temper this morning! Really, leatherwork came to me very easily, and, apart from a few struggles with gussets (no, I am not doing dressmaking!), I soon became a fairly successful amateur worker.

Then I tried metal work. As the "metalites" consider themselves most superior, I joined them with trepidation. It looked extremely easy just to bang a piece of sheet copper with a mallet. So, clutching the copper in one hand and the mallet in the other, I proceeded to bang it in (as I thought) the required manner. In exactly five minutes I was extremely "hot and bothered," my hands were aching and very grimy, and the copper was becoming beautifully frilled round the edges. Oh, those first few days! The weather was hot, and when I heated the copper on the forge to soften it I felt my face become beetroot. I put the hot metal too suddenly into the acid bath and got splashed all over, and next morning—overall, frock, and stockings were riddled with holes! My hand was blistered (through using the mallet wrongly) so that I could scarcely use it, and I was hating metal work with a deadly hatred. Everyone making fearful noises, and the smell of hot pitch mixed with gas and acid fumes! How I longed for the peace and quiet of the Art Room. Only my natural obstinacy (so I am told) kept me at it; but soon it became a little easier, and now is so extremely fascinating that I give most of my time to it.

Later, I tried jewellery, and that—well, may I give prospective students a hint. If you wish to keep your temper sweet, don't do Art Jewellery! You use a small blow-pipe in the usual manner to solder, or, rather, try to solder, the silver. I blew and blew, but nothing happened; there was the silver and there the solder; it must be the gas. This confounded strike! So I turned on more gas, and suddenly—the ring collapsed. I'd melted it! Also, there

was an awful smell of burning hair. Gazing at everyone else, only to discover that they were quite calm, I got up to look at my own hair, and saw, to my horror, a well-singed fringe! After days of struggling I got the main part finished, and only the ornamentation to do. Yes, I said only, and thought it, too; but I found that my trials had only begun. I wanted six tiny silver leaves, and I am absolutely certain that I cut out sixty, because I melted them as fast as I heated them. It did get finished at last, and I seriously thought of presenting it to the Victoria and Albert Museum as a specimen of patience and perseverance. Now I have done work in silver and gold, and have passed the stage of being scared; but whenever I start on jewellery I offer up a fervent prayer that it may be one of my lucky days. Soon I am going to try wood carving, and, as I am told one's hands get badly damaged, I am wondering if it will demoralise me more than jewellery has!

In spite of all the misery in our lives, we are very happy. When work reaches the limit, or, rather, when our tempers reach their limits, we soothe our troubled spirits with ices and chocolate, hoping that neither the Headmaster nor an Inspector will appear on the scene. Although we have to put up with damaged clothes, burnt and stained hands, and very ruffled tempers at times, I think that handcraft work is the most delightful thing in the world.

K. P.

A Medley.

Martin Chuzzlewit, holding Little Dorrit by the hand, met Barnaby Rudge and Nicholas Nickleby, who said they had seen from the window of the Old Curiosity Shop, Dombey and Son enter Bleak House. Thither they repaired, and when they entered beheld a homely scene. The Cricket on the Hearth was chirping merrily, and there sat David Copperfield amusing Oliver Twist with Sketches by Boz and items from Pickwick Papers. They all assembled round the fire, and, amid Great Expectations, Our Mutual Friend, The Uncommercial Traveller, began a Tale of Two Cities in Hard Times, using many Household Words; while, accompanied by The Chimes, were heard in the distance the notes of Christmas Carols as the waits, conducted by Edwin Drood, passed down the village.

O. S.

Oxford Local Examinations.

The successes gained in the examinations in July were as follows:—

HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION.

Group ii (Modern Studies).—A. J. Partridge (History and Latin).

SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION.

First Class Honours.—*D. S. Bailey (distinction in Geography).

Third Class Honours.—A. L. Brewer, E. M. Thomas.

Passes.—G. F. Bishop, J. E. Farmer, W. J. Gwinnett, H. L. Harwood, W. Mason, A. M. Sheppard, I. G. Staff, M. L. Zambra.

* Obtained exemption from London Matriculation.

Musical Society.

SECRETARY—Bailey.

On September 28th our season opened with a very popular programme given by the Nafford Quartette, with Miss Margaret Bond (soprano) and Mr. Leather ('cello). The Quartette is always greatly appreciated, and the solos and duets gave a delightful variety to the programme, and afforded an opportunity of rest to the other singers. This first meeting was well attended, both by members of the Society and by their friends. The second meeting was held on November 2nd, when a programme given entirely by members of the Society was thoroughly enjoyed, though the attendance was smaller than usual. Mr. Hutton contributed songs, which were greatly appreciated.

Unfortunately, it has been necessary to postpone the last meeting planned for this term, at which Mrs. Sheldon, B.Mus., was to give us a lecture-recital on Irish folk-songs. Mrs. Sheldon is known as a composer as well as a singer and lecturer on musical subjects. It is hoped that we shall have a large audience of friends for this meeting, and that it will be well supported by the Society. The date will be announced later.

L. S.

Wireless Society.

Towards the end of last term the Society held an exhibition of apparatus made by members of the Society. The exhibits were varied, and included valve sets, crystal sets, amplifying

units, indoor aerials, coils, etc. Each exhibit was thoroughly tested on the School receiver, and gave gratifying results. There was ample evidence of care and skill in the making of the material shown, and prizes were won by Earp, Harris i., Brewer, Gwinnett, and Brookes.

The Scouts.

We have been compelled, through scarcity of funds, to postpone our annual outing until next year, when we hope to visit the Cheddar Gorge. Meanwhile we are endeavouring to increase our capital by giving an entertainment, and we feel justified in calling upon all who can to support the cause.

So far the meetings of the Troop have been taken up with competitive games, and, since half-term, with rehearsals. A considerable number of new boys joined us at the beginning of this term, and the Troop is now at good strength.

Football.

The prevalence of measles has reacted unfavourably on the career of the football eleven this season, and on two occasions we have been unable to muster more than ten men. Notwithstanding, the results are so far encouraging that we hope for better success during the remainder of the season, provided that we are blessed with a few weeks without rain.

In the first round of the Abbey Cup Competition we were beaten by an infinitely superior team, 13—0, but since then our forward line has shown continued improvement, though the defence has been unable to settle down owing to frequent changes because of illness.

Our results to date are:—

- A.G.S. v. Old Scholars (home), lost 1—3.
- v. Coughton (home), won 6—1.
- v. Evesham P.H.G.S. (away), lost 1—2.
- v. Old Scholars (home), lost 0—3.
- v. Cheltenham (away), lost 0—13.
- v. Evesham P.H.G.S. (home), won 6—2.
- v. King's Norton G.S. (home), lost 1—3.
- v. B.S.A. (away), lost 3—7.
- v. Birmingham University 3rd XI. (home), won 6—4.
- v. Astwood Bank Scouts 2nd XI. (away), lost 1—3.
- v. Redditch S.S. (home), lost 5—6.
- v. Redditch S.S. (away), lost 0—4.
- v. Astwood Bank Scouts 2nd XI. (home), lost 3—5.

A. J. P.

Hockey.

Neither weather nor infection has been too kind to the hockey this season; but, in spite of these undesirable lodgers, we have been able to play four first eleven matches and one second. Our first eleven defence, though at first feeling the loss of some of our last year stalwarts, has nevertheless quite fulfilled all expectations. The results of the matches played so far are as follows:—

FIRST XI. v. Bromsgrove S.S. (away), won 1—0.

v. Shottery Ladies (home), won 7—0.

v. Studley College (home), lost 4—8.

v. Evesham P.H.G.S. (home), won 6—1.

SECOND XI. v. Evesham P.H.G.S. 2nd XI. (away), won 4—0.

Two Sides matches only have as yet been played. The Brownies beat the Tomtits by four goals to one, and the Jackals beat the Tomtits by eight goals to one.

E. G. L.

For the Juniors.

The Diary of a Guy.

MONDAY. "I hear November the 5th's coming soon. Is it something nice to eat? Br-r-r-r! I *am* cold, because I have no clothes on."

TUESDAY. "Hooray! Have had a coat, trousers, and boots given to me! Don't you think I'm smart? Have been carried into the shed to-night. I am glad I have got a place that is warm and dry."

WEDNESDAY. "What can be happening? I've been stuffed full of hay, and queer cardboard rolls. Everyone is talking of Guys and fireworks. I expect *they* are the Guys. As for fireworks, I saw a smithy yesterday, by a fire. *That's* what I call fireworks."

THURSDAY. "To-day, I was taken round the town, and everyone shouted 'Guy! Guy!'" and

"Please to remember
The Fifth of November,
Gunpowder and Treason and Plot."

To-day, they built up a heap of sticks, and on posts, etc., they have hung those funny coloured rolls of cardboard!"

FRIDAY. "Oh, dear! Something's happening! They have put me in the very centre of the sticks! What is happening? . . . Bang! Fizzzzz-z-z-z! Splutter! Crackle! Oh! I am hot! Oh! I'm burning! Oh! I'm going-going"

"Now he's gone!" shouted John.

O. G. J.

The Wicked Magician and His Wife.

There lived, a long time ago, a wicked Magician and his Wife, the Witch of the Wood.

One day the Magician went to plunder a fine castle, that stood upon the top of an enchanted mountain. Now, to reach the castle, he had to cross an enchanted lake, which was by no means easy, because no boat could live against such a current. So he sent for his Wife and told her to make a magic; and so she did. She held a piece of string to a sheet of paper, on which she had written the word "Vanish." Then she waved the paper over the lake, and immediately it vanished. So the Magician was able to reach the castle, and at last he captured it.

He drove out the owners, and then shut all the doors so that no one should know that he and his Wife were there.

Meanwhile, the two owners of the castle, who were really a Prince and Princess, were wandering sadly through a wood, when suddenly, round a corner, a huge dragon appeared, creeping noiselessly towards them. The Prince, whose name was Richard, sprang behind a tree, pulling Marigold, his wife, with him. But the dragon was quite harmless; he was a fairy dragon, and could talk. So he said, "If you will not hurt me I will take you back to the castle and capture it for you."

So they got on the dragon's back, and away they flew. They landed on the roof, and entered the house by a window. First they found the Witch, and the Dragon scratched her with his poison-claw and she died; then he breathed poison on the Magician and his household, and they died.

The Prince and Princess were happy once more, and the Dragon lived with them ever afterwards.

R. SPENCER.